Danger to rail tracks due to illegal mining of coal

1321. SHRI RAJKUMAR DHOOT : Will the Minister of RAILWAYS be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that there is danger to rail tracks on account of illegal mining of coal in West Bengal and Bihar;

(b) if so, details thereof; and

(c) the steps being taken to ensure safety of rail passengers and to prevent any mishaps?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF RAILWAYS (SHRI R. VELU): (a) and (b) No, Sir. Regular inspections are being conducted on Railways. As soon as any case of illegal mining on Railways land come to notice, Divisional authorities, take prompt action and advise Civil and Mining authorities.

(c) Prevention of illegal mining activities is the subject matter of State Government concerned. Railway has requested to State Government and Eastern Coal Field Limited (ECL) authorities to take necessary action.

As and when cases of illegal mining are noticed, Railway take immediate action to stop these activities and advise Civil Authorities also. In case any danger to railway traffic is noticed, then railway traffic is also suspended, if situation so warrants.

Gangmen died on duty

1322. SHRI SANJAY RAUT : Will the Minister of RAILWAYS be pleased to state:

(a) the number of gangmen died on duty due to train accidents, while actually repairing the railway tracks in the year 2005-06 and how many died in the current year;

(b) what precautions his Ministry proposes to save the precious life of gangmen while repairing railway track;

(c) how much compensation is paid to each gangman who dies, while working on railway track; and

(d) whether his Ministry give employment to one member of family of gangman who dies in the accident?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF RAILWAYS (SHRI R. VELU): (a) 183 Nos. Gangmen died on duty to train accidents in the year 2005-06 and 198 Nos. died in the current year while actually repairing the railway tracks.

(b) The following precautions are taken to contain accidents at work spots to save the precious Iives of gangmen while repairing Railway track:—

(i) Introduction of visibility reflective safety jackets for the gangmen working on the track during the night.

(ii) Provision of remote operated hooters to give warning to working gangmen at all work sites.

(iii) Mobile phone or Walkie-Talkie sets wherever necessary are being provided at work sites.

(iv) Posting of look-out men at all work sites where visibility is poor.

(v) At locations where night working is unavoidable, proper lighting arrangements are being made.

(vi) Provision of torches to all night Patrolmen/Watchmen.

(vii) Welding works and other important tracks works that require line block are being carried out under traffic line block.

(viii) Posting of competent Supervisors at all works sites to ensure safety.

(ix) In case of line, block works such as renewal of points and crossing etc., Caution orders are being issued for the trains passing on adjoining track to give whistle freely to alert the working gangmen.

(c) As per sections 124 and 124-Aof the Railways Act, Compensation is payable to the dependents of passengers including Railway men on duty who are killed as a result of passenger train accidents or other untoward incidents. The amount of compensation payable in case of death is Rs. 4 lakhs. Gangmen being Railway employees are entitled to compensation under the Workman's Compensation Act. However, they can claim compensation only under one of the above mentioned two Acts.

(d) Yes, Sir. Railways give employment to one member of family of gangman who dies in the accident.